

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending.

Claims 1, 4-7 and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yano et al. (US 2003/0210370). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yano et al. (US 2003/0210370) in view of Kawabata (JP 2001-343529). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yano et al. (US 2003/0210370) in view of “Admitted Prior Art”. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 3 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, claim 1.

Applicants hold that Yano is not valid prior art to be cited against the presently claimed invention. The earliest date that Yano is available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is March 28, 2003. This date is after the Applicants’ filing date of the Japanese foreign priority document JP 2003/061766, which is March 7, 2003.

Applicants herein submit a sworn English translation of Japanese Foreign Priority Document JP 2003-061766. This document establishes that Applicants are entitled to a priority date of March 7, 2003. Thus, Yano cannot be valid prior art to cite against Applicants’ presently claimed invention.

Favorable reconsideration of this rejection is earnestly solicited.

U.S. Patent Application 10/548,085	Sworn English translation of Japanese Foreign Priority Document JP 2003-061766
Claim 1	Specification, Page 3, Lines 5-18
Claim 2	Specification, Page 3, Lines 19-23
Claim 3	Specification, Page 3, Lines 24-25
Claim 4	Specification, Page 3, Lines 26-28
Claim 5	Specification, Page 3, Line 29-Page 4, Line 1
Claim 6	Specification, Page 4, Lines 2-4
Claim 7	Specification, Page 4, Lines 5-9
Claim 8	Specification, Page 4, Lines 10-11
Claim 9	Specification, Page 4, Lines 12-14
Claim 10	Specification, Page 4, Lines 15-17
Claim 11	Specification, Page 4, Lines 18-20
Claim 12	Specification, Page 4, Lines 21-22
Claim 13	Specification, Page 4, Lines 23-24

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

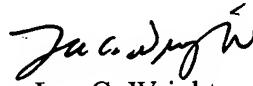
Application No.: 10/548,085
Art Unit: 2871

Response under 37 CFR §1.111
Attorney Docket No.: 053038

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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